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President: Louis Repetto

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SOMETHING OLD

The Lafayette Historical Society has helped to purchase "Old Betsy"--this Ford fire truck was originally purchased by the citizens of Lafayette in the early twenties. Prior to this time, the community had a "homemade" fire truck. The Ford fire truck was in continuous use until the thirties. The Lafayette Fire Department by this time had one paid employee, the fire chief, Ed. Morrison. The rest of the fire crew were Lafayette volunteers.

Sometime in the 1950's, the fire truck was used by a service group; it then was sold to John Penn, who, in turn, sold it to Earl Sanko in the early sixties. It has been at the Sanko Ranch in Pleasant Hill, uncared for during this period.

A fund-raising to buy back the engine, known as "Old Betsy" by the fire department, was begun in April, 1977. Half the amount needed to purchase the engine was donated by the Lafayette Historical Society; the other half by interested individuals, groups, and business leaders. The fire engine has been given to the City of Lafayette; the city has agreed to provide suitable housing for the ongoing display of the fire engine.

Work to restore "Old Betsy" has been begun by Hubbard Anderson, George Wasson, Mike Roberts, Norman Tuttle Sr., and a cheerful group of Junior Chamber of Commerce members, headed by Eric Ruiter. A total of sixty hours has been spent to start the fire engine looking like new again.

Donations for the fire engine restoration should be made out to the Lafayette Historical Society--such donations are tax deductible.

SOMETHING NEW

Here is a great way to contribute toward the restoration of "Old Betsy"--handsome new T-shirts picturing the 1919 Model T Ford fire engine in red and black, with the words "Lafayette No. 1" will be for sale by September 20.

The T-shirts come in heavy weight cotton; children's sizes medium and large in gold, and adult sizes in white--small medium, large and extra large. Send orders, with \$4.50 which includes tax and postage to: Lafayette Historical Society, Box 133, Lafayette.

ORINDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAM

"An Evening with Ishii" will be presented by Kendric Morrish on Wednesday, September 21 at 7:30 p.m. in Room 7 of the Orinda Community Center. Mr. Morrish will present his personal insight into and conclusions regarding ISHII--A MAN OF TWO WORLDS. Mr. Morrish has personally met Ishii and is well acquainted with the author, Theodora Kroeber, and her family.

NEW MEMBERS

Please contact Membership Chairman, Chris Schreiber at 284-7538 with the name of friends whom you feel would like to become members of the Lafayette Historical Society.

AN APOLOGY

The Society Board of Directors extends a sincere apology to the family of former Lafayette Fire Chief, Ed. Morrison for an inadvertent error in the last issue of this newsletter. We are pleased to be able to print the following information regarding Mr. Morrison:

"A native of Illinois, Ed Morrison moved to the Bay Area in 1906. Just prior to the San Francisco earthquake. In 1907, he and his wife Maud purchased Homedale Farm. It was just south of the Acalanes High School. They lived there until after the end of World War I when they moved into Lafayette and opened the first garage in that city.

Morrison became chief of the Volunteer Fire Department which was operated from his garage. He later was instrumental in building the first fire house

When the Lafayette Fire District was formed he was chosen as its first paid fire chief. He retired from the Department on December 1, 1948. He passed away June 26, 1967 at the age of 88."

INDIAN ARTIFACTS

We extend our thanks to the Leo Schell family for the generous donation of Indian Artifacts to the Lafayette Historical Society. Three pestles or grinding stones and part of a mortar (grinding bowl) were discovered by Mr. Schell while land surveying in Lafayette along Blackhawk Road during the 1950's. These items are a significant addition to our historical collection and will be on display at the November meeting for all members to see.

SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to Mr. William Rosenberg, now living in Oakland, for donating a number of papers from Mrs. Margaret Bickerstaff Dewing Rosenberg's files: Among these papers was a copy of a letter (dated 1936) of resignation to the Walnut Creek board of trustees. Another letter, also dated 1936, gave her retirement salary as \$600. per year after 37 years of teaching. A receipt from P.A. Smith of San Francisco dated 1925 for a figured window installed in the Presbyterian Church in Walnut Creek--a donation from Jennie to that church.

A thank you to Ms. Phyllis Petersen, recently retired after 37 years with the Acalanes High School district, for four large scrap books and numerous photographs of Acalanes High School. The newspaper clippings date back to 1938 when the high school was in its planning stages and the early photos show the school being built surrounded by tomatoe fields. Acalanes opened in 1940 with approximately 400 students and Ms. Petersen was secretary to the principal-superintendent.

Both Ms. Petersen and Mr. Rosenberg have made tape recordings for the Historical Society.

Thanks also to the society members who helped man our booth and the fire engine at the Lafayette Concours this summer: Dolly and Lee Pfautch, Angela Broadhead, Lisa Walker, Jil and Bil Plummer, Marge and Austin Sperry, Betsy and Gary Willcuts, Eleanor Meyers and Joan Merryman.

GUIDE TO HISTORIC LAFAYETTE

Additional copies of our interesting new guide can be obtained from the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, Lafayette City Hall, and Lafayette Public Library.
